

82D CONGRESS
1st Session

} HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES }

REPORT
No. 579

PROVIDING FOR BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS OF THE BADLANDS NATIONAL MONUMENT, IN THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

JUNE 15, 1951.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BENTSEN, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 3540]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 3540) to provide for boundary adjustments of the Badlands National Monument, in the State of South Dakota, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

H. R. 3540 authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to adjust and redefine the exterior boundaries of the Badlands National Monument in South Dakota. No expenditure of Federal funds is required.

At his discretion, the Secretary would be empowered to alter the boundary lines of the monument by eliminating certain lands and adding other lands. The bill provides that the revisions shall not increase the total acreage from its present area of approximately 154,119 acres. Administrative jurisdiction over the lands eliminated from the monument would be transferred to the Secretary of Agriculture for disposition under title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act.

The bill also authorizes the Secretary to acquire privately owned lands within the monument by exchanging them for Federal lands of equal value. Also authorized would be extension of the monument into the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, if the tribal council so agrees.

At hearings held before the committee, representatives of the National Park Service stated that H. R. 3540 was the result of several years' negotiation and field study by the Departments of Interior and

2 BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS OF BADLANDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Agriculture. The passage of this measure will greatly facilitate the administration of the national monument by the Department of the Interior.

Similar legislation (H. R. 7342) during the Eighty-first Congress was reported by this committee on July 24, 1950, and passed the House July 27, 1950.

A favorable report of the Department of the Interior is set forth below in full and further explains the purpose of the bill.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., May 16, 1951.

HON. JOHN R. MURDOCK,
*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. MURDOCK: Your committee has requested a report on H. R. 3540, a bill to provide for boundary adjustments of the Badlands National Monument, in the State of South Dakota, and for other purposes.

We recommend the enactment of H. R. 3540.

This proposed legislation, in our opinion, would provide an equitable solution to the land problems relating to Badlands National Monument and also would permit other Federal agencies who have land problems in that vicinity to carry out their functions more efficiently. Section 1 of the bill authorizes the adjustment of the boundaries of the national monument so that its total area as revised would not exceed the present area of the monument. By section 3 of the bill, administrative jurisdiction over all Federal lands eliminated from the monument would be transferred to the Secretary of Agriculture for use, administration, and disposition in accordance with the provisions of title 3 of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act. Section 4 of the bill, which authorizes land exchanges, we believe, would be particularly helpful in acquiring the non-Federal land holdings within the national monument, using for exchange purposes lands within the Badlands-Fall River soil-conservation project. This would result in a considerable saving as compared with the purchase of such lands, and it is probable that these exchanges can be consummated with only nominal cost to the United States.

Section 5 of the bill is permissive in nature. This section would authorize the inclusion within the national monument of not to exceed 4,000 acres of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, such land to be included only with the consent of the tribal council of the Oglala Sioux Tribe of Indians. It is hoped that a satisfactory solution can be achieved under subsection (a). If not, subsection (b) would pave the way for assemblage of data to determine the cost, not now ascertained, of proceeding under subsection (b).

From our study of the Badlands National Monument and our experience in the administration of this national monument, we conclude that the boundary revisions which can be accomplished under the terms of this proposed legislation would be very desirable. We believe, also, that this proposal will be favored by the other Federal agencies who administer lands in the region of the national monument.

We have been advised by the Bureau of the Budget that there is no objection to the submission of this report to your committee.

Sincerely yours,

MASTIN G. WHITE,
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Interior.

Enactment of this legislation is unanimously recommended by the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.